

Sunday, January 26, 2003 America Online: EricNumis

Subj: **Fwd: Your Mickley article**
 Date: 1/25/2003 12:22:42 PM Central Standard Time
 From: [EricNumis](#)
 To: [Joelorosz](#)

Forwarded Message:

Subj: **Your Mickley article**
 Date: 1/23/2003 9:34:50 PM Central Standard Time
 From: [EricNumis](#)
 To: [REDACTED]

Joel: I was delighted to read your article in AJN Series II No. 13. When you indicated that numismatics was a pastime then and not an industry It touched my heart. When I first began over 80 years ago it was a collateral discipline and not an industry. It was stimulating and fun between collectors and dealers. You brought out the enjoyment Mickley had in collecting and helping others collect. I still live in the Mickley age as to helping others reasearch and collect but I enjoy writing just as you do. I knew I was going to burglarized even though my good things were at the bank but when it happened I went on and pretended I still had what I lost. Your research for your article was obviously very thorough and the end notes were great too. Congratulations on a superb piece of work. Keep writing and thrive. Eric



Joel

Thanks so much for this kind and generous note. Your remarkable and illustrious career is an inspiration to me—it demonstrates that it is possible to excel in numismatics without being ruined by the money-grubbing element. I just hope I can continue to follow your example of finding the joy and learning to be recompensed enough.

Eric,

Subj: **Re: Your Mickley article**
 Date: 1/26/2003 8:31:37 AM Central Standard Time
 From: [Joelorosz](#)
 To: [EricNumis](#)

Sunday, January 26, 2003 America Online: EricNumis

Subj: **Re: A visit to St. Louis?**
 Date: 12/11/2007 8:28:01 A.M. Central Standard Time
 From: Joelorosz
 To: EricNumis
 CC: [REDACTED]

Dear Eric:

Just a quick note as I am dashing out the door, with a more substantive reply to follow--

Len and I appreciate very much your excellent suggestions--some we have already acted upon, others we will in the future--and we are looking forward with keen anticipation to coming to St. Louis. Our preferred date would be early in March, but we can discuss that in more detail after the new year.

It will be a thrill to take in the Newman Museum, and a pleasure to "talk shop" with its founder! More to come....

Warm regards,
Joel

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
 To: [REDACTED]
 Sent: Sat, 8 Dec 2007 5:42 pm
 Subject: Re: A visit to St. Louis?

Dear Joel:

I am delighted that you and Len are thinking of coming for a visit to our museum and library. You are very welcome at a convenient time. I am hesitant to assure you as to what if anything new you might learn here about the first US Mint. Either dates you mention are open for me but I would like to have you assure me that I will be . alive and mentally mostly there. Can we confirm the exact date after the first of the year?

I shared with Don Taxay everything I knew at the time he wrote his masterpiece and do not think I learned anything new on your subject since then. If you have any specific literature sources to have me look for I will gladly search. There were magazines which might have unfound data such as Niles Magazine or Hunt's Merchants Magazine, etc. but I presume those might have been checked by someone. Does Harry Forman who lives in Philadelphia have any special knowledge? The Library Company of Philadelphia has phenomenal holdings. Are there any fire insurance building drawings of various blocks available that early? Have you checked the early Philadelphia newspapers for the period as to specific words or expressions in the available institution word search program so that you might find some commentary?

My best to you. Eric

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Subj: **Re: Du Simitiere**
 Date: 1/31/2009 10:21:35 P.M. Central Standard Time
 From: [Joelorosz](#)
 To: [EricNumis](#)

Dear Eric:

I once knew some curators at the New-York Historical Society, but that was back in the 80s, when I was doing research for my dissertation, and none of them work there any longer. I do believe that you have found the right place to publish the piece, however, for that institution is steeped in all things Audubon. I'm sure they will be attracted by the significance of your discovery.

I completely agree that rejecting his depiction on circulating coinage would be of a piece with Washington's character. Every time he had a chance to consolidate power, he walked away from it, from the resignation of his Commission as Lieutenant General in 1783, to his refusal to run for a third Presidential term in 1796, to his stout resistance in 1799 to those who urged him to oppose Adams in the 1800 election. It seems to me that negative evidence is very powerful here—we know that he was aware of the 1791 pieces with his bust, and if he was so disposed, he more than likely could have placed his bust on one or more of the 1792 patterns, and the 1793 regular issues. Alexander Hamilton and other High Federalists would have surely supported such a move. Yet it didn't happen—which is a powerful argument that Washington himself did not want it to happen.

Thanks, Eric, for taking my mind off my aches and pains, which are multiplying as we approach the most rigorous part of the treatment. I wish you well as you move forward on all fronts!

Warm regards,

Joel

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
 To: [REDACTED]
 Sent: Sat, 31 Jan 2009 8:52 pm
 Subject: Re: Du Simitiere

Dear Joel:

This is a partial reply to your detailed message of 1/30/09.

The Audubon matter I am told by my coauthor will be submitted to the New York Historical Society in a few weeks giving the title, subject matter in general and a few images. There is no effort to send the text at this time because we want to have them tell us if they like it. They are deeply involved with Audubon and their regular publications have a wide readership. If you have any other suggestion please let me know and if you know anyone there please free to guide me.

As to the Washington portrait matter you are absolutely correct that there is no contemporary (1792) evidence as to any comment by Washington known to me. He had a conflict of interest and was always so modest everyone knew he would say no if asked. He must have seen the 1791 pieces (He was given the gold pattern with his bust and kept it) and probably saw the Getz pieces (Washington President I) which followed the Senate's proposal. The earlier crude 1785-6 Washington bust pieces described by Crosby were probably unknown to him as were the propaganda 1783 GEORGIUS TRIUMPHO pieces.

That is it for now

Eric

In a message dated 1/30/2009 9:28:52 P.M. Central Standard Time, Joelorosz writes:

| Dear Eric:

There is nothing more encouraging to this cancer patient than to hear the first-hand testimony of a cancer survivor. Perhaps a better term would be a "cancer thrivor," for you have produced so much of such great value since 1990 that it encourages me that I will be able to bounce back with some vigor. I have only had one colonoscopy, but my limited experience would suggest that it takes about five years to prepare for one!

Thank you so much for sending the Academy of Natural Sciences a copy of my book--I really appreciate it.

Your ongoing projects, as always, are intriguing. The earliest engraving of an Audubon bird is very significant, indeed. Where do you plan to publish it? This should create quite a stir for everyone from ornithologists to collectors of Auduboniana!

Your thesis that no counterfeits of Massachusetts coinage were made during the circulating period makes good sense to me. The simplest explanation is usually the best one, and it makes sense that clipping and sweating would be infinitely easier for the unscrupulous than going to the great trouble and expense of counterfeiting the actual coins. Counterfeiting once collecting took hold--perhaps after Felt's 1839 work, or surely after the flowering of coin collecting in the U.S. in the mid-1850s, now that would make sense--whether crookedly, to deceive, or commissioned by collectors to fill gaps--a sort of an antebellum Gallery Mint--either way, there would be real incentive that would not have existed during the 17th century.

I hope that you see the 1792 Washington-(not)-on-coinage research through to fruition. I have seen dozens of statements that Washington rejected the use of his image on coinage as being too monarchical, but never once have I seen a citation as to his actual statement, which makes me wonder if he said it at all. This is a matter of some moment, for it determined the obverse treatment of U.S. coinage for more than a century, and your work would give us a solid basis for understanding why that decision was made: because of a direct statement by the President, because of a remark by the President relayed by a Congressman, or because of other factors not directly related to Washington's agency? So please do carry this through to completion--I believe that it will be an important contribution.

A quick word about the project Len Augusburger and I are working on--Frank Stewart and the first U.S. Mint. We have taken your advice, and found two insurance surveys, both created after the 1832 sale of the property to the Kates family. The biggest discovery was that the Front Building (Stewart's Administration Building) was connected via a tunnel to the Middle Building (Stewart's Coinage Building). The Mint also knocked out the partition on the second floor that separated the two structures that comprised the Front Building. Clearly, they were trying to maximize the usefulness of a very cramped space. We've also found an enormous wealth of illustrative material--all of John Ward Dunsmore's sketches for "Inspection of the First United States Coins," for example, plus several sketches for pictures that were rejected (including two watercolors of Washington's party pulling up to the outside of the Middle Building, and being greeted by David Rittenhouse). It's ironic that I've written so many articles in which the problem was a dearth of illustrative material, and now the problem is an embarrassment of riches!

I have an date with the chemotherapy unit tomorrow (the Mayo Clinic does not seem to pay much attention to weekends), so I will call this a message. All the best to you, Eric--I can't wait to see what you complete next!

Warm regards,

Joel

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

To: [REDACTED]

Sent: Thu, 29 Jan 2009 9:47 pm

Subject: Re: Du Simitiere

Dear Joel:

I fully realize what you are going through and know several who have gone through it and are living normal lives. Medicine is producing wondrous results and I am sure you are thankful they have found a solution to your unfortunate mess. I had colon cancer in 1990 and fortunately I now have a semicolon instead of a colon. I have had a colonoscopy six times since and am now supposedly clear. The doctor told me that I have to have another one when I am 102. So I have almost 5 years to get prepared. I will take care of sending your book and it will not be FORGOTTEN.

You asked what I was doing. I completed in 2008 the 5th edition of *The Early Paper Money of America* and *The Fugio Copper Coinage of 1787*. Now I working on several articles which is not the right thing to do. I am writing that no silver counterfeits of Massachusetts 1652 silver was ever created during its circulating period. Several are classified as counterfeit but I argue that it was too easy for crooks to clip pieces rather than go to the trouble of counterfeiting. I am also working with another researcher on the new discovery of the earliest engraving of an Audubon bird. I was lucky to find it. On another matter I would like your opinion as to whether I should continue to work on the details of why Washington's image was not put on US Coinage in the 1792 legislation. I have studied the voting in the Senate and the House and determined who said what. I have found a suggestion in a newspaper that instead of an eagle on the reverse there should be a goose because a goose is not belligerent and does no harm to anyone. (A little different suggestion from the turkey) In the recent airplane accident the Canada goose seems to be harmful after all but it took over 200 years to prove that. I also want to explain that the English coiners of the 1791 and 1792 Washington patterns for copper cent coinage were not able to keep in the loop, You know a lot about this.

I have another project or so. Write me any time you have nothing better to do. Eric

In a message dated 1/28/2009 7:54:40 P.M. Central Standard Time, Joelorosz writes:

Dear Eric:

How nice to hear from you!

Normally, I would have been happy to send the Academy a copy of my book, but since the middle of the month, I have been a temporary resident of Rochester, Minnesota, where I have been receiving intensive therapy at the Mayo Clinic. My doctors are all very optimistic about my prognosis, assuming that I can tolerate the therapeutic regimen, which consists of two rounds of rather toxic chemotherapy, the second of which will kill off all of my bone marrow, and the collection and transplantation of my own adult stem cells, which will reconstitute the bone marrow. I am in the first chemotherapy phase now, and feel very queasy and weak, but my doctors cheerfully tell me that I will soon look back on this as the "good old days" once I move on to the second round of chemo and the stem cell transplant! It should be worth the misery, however, for the doctors assure me that by early March, I will be in remission—and finally ready to go home!

Therefore, if you wouldn't mind sending the Academy a copy of *The Eagle That is Forgotten*, I would greatly appreciate it.

I hope all is well with you—it's hard for me to imagine that less than a year ago, Len Augsburg and I had that memorable visit with you at your museum—what are you working on now?

Warm regards,

Joel

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wed, 28 Jan 2009 5:49 pm
Subject: Du Simitiere

Dear Joel:

I was asked by the American Academy of Natural Science in Philadelphia to obtain the best

book for them on Du Simitiere's numismatics. I will buy your book and send to them unless you would prefer to send it.

This gave me a reason to write you because I was wondering how your health matters are doing. Would you be nice enough to send me some good news. Eric .

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Subj: **Re: Fun and games with Sheldon as a prime source!**
 Date: 2/13/2009 7:09:41 A.M. Central Standard Time
 From: [Joelorosz](#)
 To: [EricNumis](#), [REDACTED]

Dear Dave:

Thanks for sharing this interesting piece of detective work with us. It adds yet another reason to distrust Dr. Sheldon, who wrote so well, but did everything else, it seems, so deviously. I'm afraid that in his case, he has not only feet of clay, but in addition, a torso of clay right up to his neck. I'll leave it to others to decide if this clay torso is mesomorphic or ectomorphic!

Warm regards,

Joel

-----Original Message-----

From: Dave Bowers, [REDACTED]
 To: [REDACTED]
 Sent: Thu, 12 Feb 2009 10:46 pm
 Subject: Fun and games with Sheldon as a prime source!

Fun and games with Sheldon as a prime source! A snippet from my ms for the *GB of Half Cents and Large Cents*:

By January 25, 1796, copper, silver, and gold coins were in general circulation, drawing comment from citizens, including in a letter of this date from Carlisle Pollock, of New York City, to General Williams of Salem in the same state, which included this:

I have seen all of the coins already issued and nothing can be more wretched; an unmeaning fool's head on one side and something that resembles a turkey cock on the other. Oh, shame, shame, shame.... A plough and a sheaf of wheat would have been better than an idiot's head with flowing hair which was meant to denote Liberty, but which the world will suppose was intended to designate the head of an Indian squaw. But heaven forbid that future ages should judge the taste and talents of the present citizens of America by so mean and pitiful a sample of their work.[1][1]

[1][1] Frank Stewart, *History of the First U.S. Mint*, 106. Sheldon, *Penny Whimsy*, pp. 64-65 misleadingly attributes this to a criticism of the 1793 *Chain cent* by conveniently omitting the 1796=2 0date and eliminating the reference to the bird on the reverse!

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